

27 March 2006
Monday

READINGS

Psalm 89:1-18; Genesis 49:1-28; I Corinthians 10:14-11:1; Mark 7:24-37

DEVOTION

My father was far different than Jacob. He was many things, but perfect he was not. He loved my brothers and me and did bless us all in a different ways. As a young man I learned something about my father, which blessed me with understanding that allowed me to love and respect not only him, but others who have entered my life, flaws and all!

I had grown up hearing all the great exploits and adventures my dad had experienced in his life. Most of these from World War II. As I aged, so did the stories and so my belief that any of them could have occurred, (at age 15, I knew everything). Most prevalent and seemingly unbelievable of his stories were the ones surrounding his time as a body guard for General Eisenhower. When such stories were repeated again and again (to what seemed like any one who would listen,) I would shrink away, disavowing any recognition that I even knew him!

One day, during our travels, we ended up just outside of Abilene Kansas, the boyhood home and museum dedicated to General Eisenhower. The displays were laid out in chronological order. My father walked quickly, all but ignoring the childhood years through the years before WW II. However, all that changed when we entered this era. Something changed in my dad. I remember watching him closely and hoping he would not stop and talk to someone. He stopped and studied the displays closely, looking at picture after picture with an intensity I had never seen before. Then my greatest fear became reality. He made a scene, and what a scene it was!

My father spotted the General's Staff car he used during WWII; it had its doors open and roped off, my dad stepped over the rope, walked to the front passenger seat, and sat down; putting his foot on the running board. He reached in his pocket, took out a cigarette, and sat there! It took only seconds for the museum staff to run over to the car, ordering my dad to please get out.

As I stood there looking for a place to hide, my dad turned to the staff and simply said "do you know how many hours I sat here and how many cigarettes I smoked waiting for him?" Then he got up, stepped over the rope, and started to walk on. The museum staff walked after him asking him his name, asking him if he knew the General. My dad had an audience, and what an audience it was! It took only a few minutes for them to find duty rosters with his name on them, and a picture, and there was my dad looking more like me standing next to the car, holding a door as a gray coated General bent forward to enter the back seat. To this day I realize how blessed I am to be his son, from that day on my dad was a hero.

LTC James Hay, 3rd COSCOM